

Matthews Celebrates National Community Planning Month October 2017

Calling families and friends to get together and be community planners for an hour!! Then tell us what you discover!

October is National Community Planning Month, and this year Matthews has a group activity for you to do to help us celebrate.

Get your family members together, or a group of neighbors or friends, for an hour to investigate a street intersection in Matthews. Then send us your conclusions. We'll post submissions on the Planning & Development Department webpage here under "What's New!" Maybe your suggestions will be implemented!

Here's what your family or group can do:

1) Select a specific street intersection. It can be at the entrance to a neighborhood, in downtown, along a main road corridor, or anywhere that is safe for your size group to stand for a while. Ideally, you should have between three and nine people at any one location. Your group may choose to fill out the answers individually, in pairs, or all together especially if younger children are a part of your team.

2) Arrive as a group at the designated intersection. Hand out the list of "Taking It In" questions to each participant, along with something stiff to write on and a pen or pencil. Everyone can then spend about ten minutes looking at the intersection. Using the list of "Taking It In" questions, write down what you see, being careful to only list factual observations, and do not try to arrive at any judgements or conclusions at this time.

3) Review everyone's answers. When everyone has had time to do their observations, let each person talk about what they noticed as they looked around the intersection. How many items did everyone include on their lists? Did anyone note something no one else realized was there?

4) Consider the impacts or effects of what you saw. Hand out the "How Do These Items Impact This Intersection?" page to each participant, and take about 15 minutes to think about how this intersection is used by different people – examples might include people in cars, truck drivers, police officers, someone waiting at a bus stop, a group of children going to school or to an ice cream store, someone in a wheelchair, or someone who is blind.

5) Compare your answers. Again, let each person share their thoughts. How many different ways might this intersection be used?

6) Fix a problem. Hand out the blank intersection drawing page to each participant. Work together to come up with one or more revisions to the intersection that you all agree will make it function more safely and efficiently. As you discuss this, ask each other why they would make certain changes and who would be impacted by them. If something is changed to make it easier for one type of user, will it make another one have to wait longer to cross, or make it more difficult to make a turn, or some other unintended result?

7) Send us your group's intersection page with suggested changes. Family and group responses will be posted on the Town Planning & Development Department webpage through the month of October. Send to planning@matthewsnc.com, or to Planning & Development Dept, 232 Matthews Station St, Matthews NC 28105.



#PlanningMonth

October 2017



Taking It In

How many street segments converge at this intersection?

How many lanes of traffic are in each street segment?

Are there any right- or left-turn lanes?

Are there any sidewalks, and if so, how wide are they, and how close are they to the edge of the street?

Are there any worn dirt paths?

Are there any street name signs to tell you where you are at?

If so, are they easy to read?

Are there any signs or signals telling motor vehicles when they can stop, go, or turn?

Are there other signs along any of the street segments at this intersection, and if so, what do they say?

Are there any visual obstructions for motor vehicle drivers as they approach the intersection?

Are there trees, shrubs, tall grass, or other vegetation near the intersection?

Are there any overhead utility wires and supporting poles in or near the intersection?

Are there streetlights in or near the intersection?

Are there any puddles on the road pavement, or ruts beside the edge of pavement?

Are there any storm drain grates in the road pavement?

Are there raised curbs, and if so, what condition are they in?

Do you see any people not in motor vehicles (other than your own group) at this intersection?

Do you see any bike riders? Do you see any evidence there have been bike riders at this intersection, such as tire tracks, or bike racks?

Do you see any buses or bus stops at this intersection?

What buildings are closest to the intersection, and what are they used for?

Do any buildings have "front" doors with a walkway out to the intersection?

Do any buildings, including houses, have driveways or parking areas between the buildings and the streets?

What else is between the buildings and the streets?

Is it loud or quiet? Can you talk to each other in your group without shouting?

Can you feel a breeze as vehicles drive by?

Do you see anything special or unique to this intersection?

How Do These Items Impact This Intersection?

What might prevent someone in a motor vehicle from turning left at this intersection at any given moment?

What might prevent a pedestrian from crossing the entire intersection? Why?

Would this be a safe place for children to cross? Why or why not?

If someone was walking here during a rainstorm, do you think they might get splashed as cars drive by?

If you were walking here at noon, how comfortable would you feel? Why?

Is there tall grass or other vegetation that may cause a problem for drivers, bicyclists, and/or pedestrians to see each other?

If it was a really hot day, would you like more large trees for shade around this intersection?

If you had to walk here after dark, do you think drivers could see you very well?

If you could say where a sidewalk was built at this intersection, how far away from the edge of the road would you want it to be?

If one or more of the buildings near this intersection became vacant, what types of new land uses (stores, restaurants, offices, residences, religious organizations, recreational facilities, etc.) do you think should go in? Why? Are there certain land uses you would not want to see here?

Take a minute to think about the uses you said you would like to see here:

Which ones might increase the number of vehicles turning in and out of the corner properties?

Which ones might increase bicycles and pedestrians at this intersection?

Would people want to live close to this corner? Why?

Would any of the uses you selected benefit if a bus stopped at this corner?

If a corner at this intersection became a school, how would that affect this intersection?

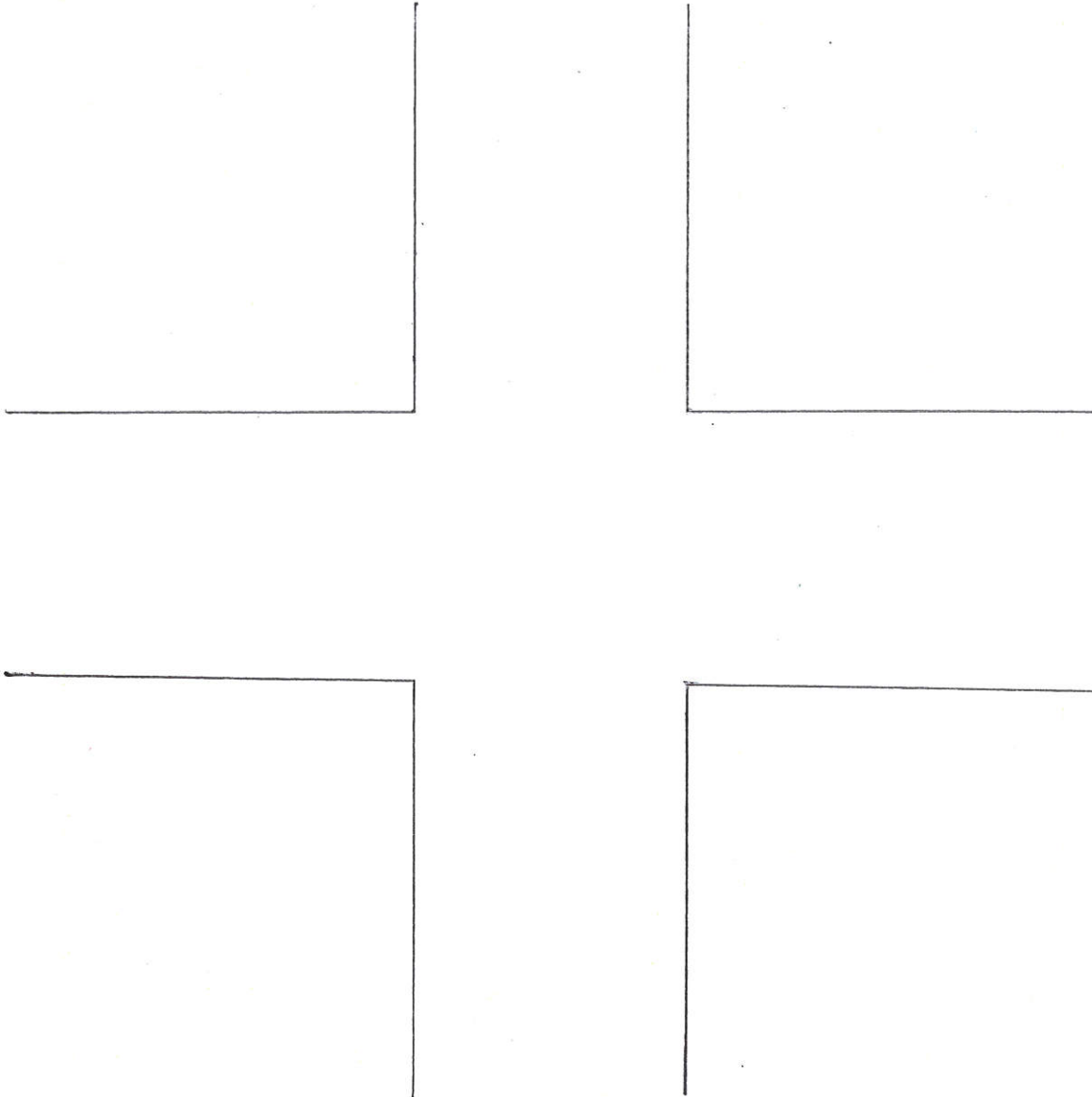
Can you think of other impacts that might result for the way this intersection is currently laid out?

Intersection Drawing

This assumes a typical 4-sided intersection. If your location is different, draw it on the reverse side.

Write in street names, and mark how many lanes are going in each direction.

Draw how you might change this intersection, such as: add turn lanes; remove pavement; relocate a sidewalk; create a widened pavement area for a bus stop; replace existing building with a different land use; add trees or other landscaping; add street lighting for cars and/or pedestrians.



What change(s) do you suggest? _____

Who is in your group? _____

Scan and send this page to: planning@matthews.com, or send to Planning & Development Dept, 232 Matthews Station Street, Matthews NC 28105